

CALFED OPERATIONS COORDINATION GROUP
May 24, 2000 MEETING NOTES AND ACTION ITEMS

Review of April 26 meeting notes

No revisions were made to the April 26, 2000 CALFED Ops meeting notes.

Announcements

DWR is continuing to post the agendas, meeting notes, and handouts to the CALFED Ops website: <http://www.woco.water.ca.gov/calfedops/index.html>

The CALFED Ops email reflector is ready. Instructions explaining how participants can subscribe/unsubscribe to the email reflector were distributed.

Reclamation plans to pursue approval to use the first stage of joint point of diversion under D-1641 to pump water at Banks for the Tracy Golf Course. The Tracy Golf Course is a CVP contractor that can only receive water from the SWP system. In all, only about 300 acre-feet are pumped from June through November, a maximum rate of 98 acre-feet/month. No objections were raised at the Ops Group meeting regarding use of JPOD for this purpose.

The following handouts were provided at the meeting:

1. CALFED Operations Discussion List (Reflector) Group Subscribe Instructions, USBR, Lowell Ploss
2. Draft Delta Smelt Working Group Decision Process, USFWS, Stephanie Brady
3. Delta Smelt Survey 1999 vs. 2000 Comparison, DFG, Kevin Fleming
4. Mean Catch of Unmarked Salmon/Tow in Kodiak Trawl at Mossdale, May 24, 2000, DFG, Jim White
5. SWP Operations Package (includes 2000 Operations Plan Update for Water Operations Management Team), May 23, 2000, DWR, Curtis Creel
6. Plan of Delta Exports, May 22 & 24, 2000, DWR, Curtis Creel
7. WY 2000 b(2) Accounting (Oct 1 – May 14) and 800 taf Accounting Summary, May 19, 2000, USBR, Tom Morstein-Marx

SWRCB

The Division of Water Rights adopted WR Order 2000-02 on March 15, 2000.
<http://www.waterrights.ca.gov/orders/wro2000-02.htm>

The Order amends D-1641 and denies petitions for reconsideration of D-1641. Since then the SWRCB has been sued by 60 different parties in 11 separate lawsuits. The SWRCB is seeking to get the lawsuits joined into one lawsuit to be heard by the Sacramento Superior court. Bay/Delta staff are working on

preparation of the hearing record. The record contains over 3000 Hearing exhibits, reporter's transcripts, briefs, statements, notices, rulings and other correspondence. The record will be put onto CD-ROM for presentation to the court and plaintiffs.

The SWRCB received the DWR and the USBR request dated May 22 to use Joint Points of Diversion. The Executive Director is reviewing the proposal and will respond in a timely manner. Approval will likely be contingent upon the DWR and the USBR updating the Water Level Response Plan with the South Delta Water Agency.

The SWRCB reported that the hearing phase of the Yuba River Hearing has been completed. SWRCB staff are analyzing the record and working on a draft decision. Staff may possibly do some additional analysis.

Fishery Status

Winter-run Chinook Salmon:

Winter-run Chinook salmon spawn upstream from early April to late May. A water temperature of 56°F at Bend Bridge triggered Keswick releases for 3 days, but the releases would be ramped down later in the week. The juvenile winter-run chinook outmigration period is over for the 1999-2000 season. No winter-run size juvenile chinook have been observed at the Delta fish collection facilities since mid-April. In the upper Sacramento River, carcass surveys and aerial redd surveys are underway for adult winter-run chinook salmon. Low and clear streamflow conditions have provided good conditions for observations of spawning fish and the collection of carcasses. Early results from the carcass surveys suggest a relatively good escapement for winter-run chinook in 2000.

Steelhead and Spring-run Chinook:

The CVP-OCAP consultation for steelhead and spring-run chinook has not made much progress during the past month. NMFS, DFG, Reclamation, and DWR staff are proceeding with a re-initiation of the existing consultation and plan to extend the biological opinion through March 2001.

Spring-run: Nothing to report.

Splittail: Nothing to report.

Delta Smelt:

Plots comparing 20mm Delta smelt surveys from 1999 and 2000 were presented showing delta smelt farther downstream this year when compared to last year. However, DFG reported that the number of delta smelt sampled in the surveys is lower this year as compared to past years.

The red light was exceeded on May 21. Reclamation and DWR have re-initiated consultation and are discussing the need for additional actions with FWS and DFG.

A Draft Delta Smelt Working Group Decision Process was sent out for review and comments two weeks ago. This documentation process will help reduce impact of staff turnover.

Fall Run Chinook Salmon:

A plot of the mean catch of unmarked salmon per tow in the Kodiak trawl at Mossdale showed that the salmon were dribbling out.

NNG and DAT Update

To facilitate fishery discussions at the Water Operations Management Team meetings held each Tuesday afternoon, the DAT and NNG calls are being moved from Wednesday to Tuesday mornings from 10 am to 12 am beginning June 6.

OPERATIONS

WY 2000 b(2) Accounting:

A preliminary handout showing b(2) accounting from October 1 through May 14 was distributed and being updated on USBR's website. So far, the Department of the Interior has used about 700 TAF of b(2) water for various upstream and Delta fishery actions. The DOI forecast shows using the rest of the water during the summer.

CVP/SWP Operations Status:

The current State and Federal reservoir levels and export rates were presented as per the SWP Operations Package handout. The June outflow criteria were discussed. DWR also distributed plots of the SWP/CVP projected operations as planned on May 22 and modified on May 24. The May 22 plan was for SWP pumping to ramp up to 5,000 cfs on May 27 and continue at that level through about June 4. The modified plan (agreed to by Reclamation, FWS, DFG, and DWR at the WOMT meeting the previous day) has SWP pumping very low for four days followed

by ramping to about 6,000 cfs. The Delta Smelt Work Group will evaluate the data after the curtailment period.

2000 Operations Plan:

DWR provided updated tables showing the impact and recovery plan for SWP/CVP operations.

Temporary Barriers:

HORB:

The barrier at the head of Old River was breached on May 19 and has since been removed. Some work will continue into next week to finish removing loose rock on the channel bottom, and to complete channel soundings to ensure the channel is restored to it's pre-installation condition.

Agricultural Barriers:

The flap gates on Middle River were tied open on May 19 and will remain in that position until the end of the month. Because the flap gates on the barrier in Old River near DMC could not be tied open in a timely fashion, a notch was cut in the barrier to provide an opening that is equivalent to flap gates being held open. Normal operations of these two barriers are expected to resume on June 1 when the Grantline Canal barrier is expected to be closed.

Missing Data:

As a follow-up to discussions at last month's meeting, EPA expressed interest in additional discussions of how real-time water quality and flow data are collected, summarized, and reported.

ACTION ITEM: Nick Wilcox will convene a subgroup to review existing processes .

Agenda items for Next Meeting . . . June 28, 2000

Summarize VAMP biological and operational results. Dan Fults will take the lead for coordinating the presentation.